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(56) Documents Cited

GB 2015324 A

GB 0606298 A

GB 0188835 A

US 5617884 A

US 4621387 A

US 4558483 A

(58) Field of Search

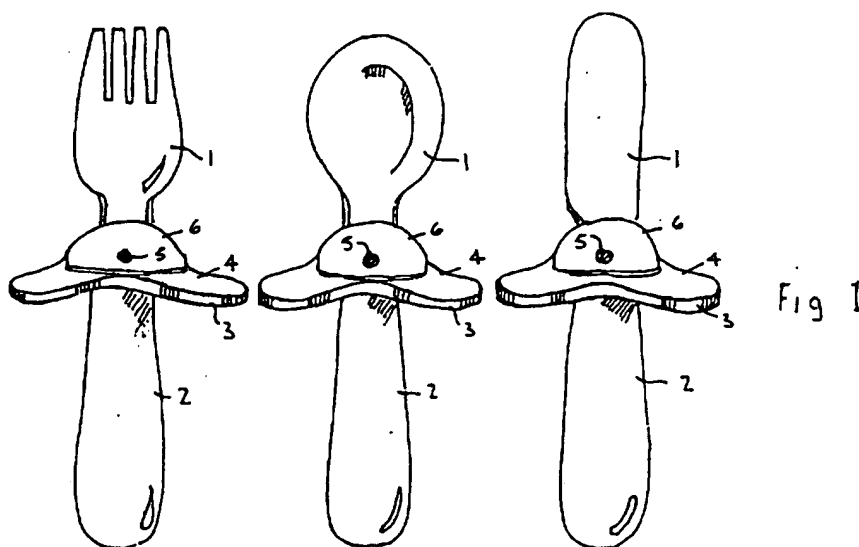
UK CL (Edition Q) A4A AC16 AC20, A4K KCB KFX
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3/02 29/02

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(54) Abstract Title

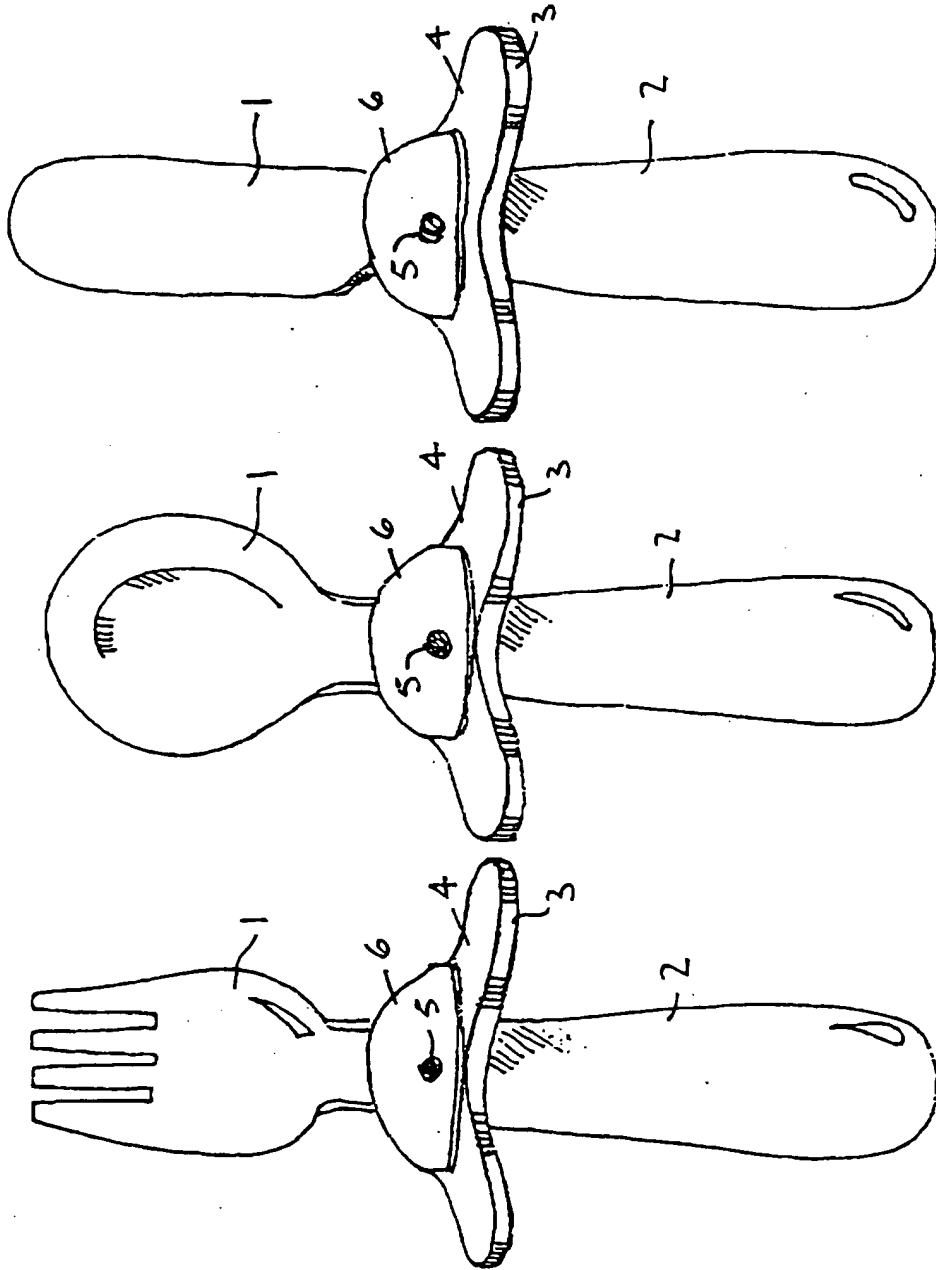
Domestic Utensil with a hand or mouth guard

(57) A domestic utensil, primarily for a child or a disabled person, such as a piece of cutlery, a toothbrush or a hairbrush has an operative end 1 and a handle end 2 with a stop means or guard 3 adjacent to the operative portion. The guard prevents the user's hand sliding from the handle onto the operative portion and it may also prevent the utensil being entirely pushed into the user's mouth. The guard can be in the form of a flange 4, which may be screwed onto the utensil through an extended portion 6, or the guard could be permanently secured to the handle. The guard may extend round the entire circumference of the handle and may be in the form of a flat disc or a bowl, with its concave surface facing the handle end 2, and the guard may possess holes. The guard may be made of a plastics material and/or a metal and may have a resilient protective edge.



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Fig 1



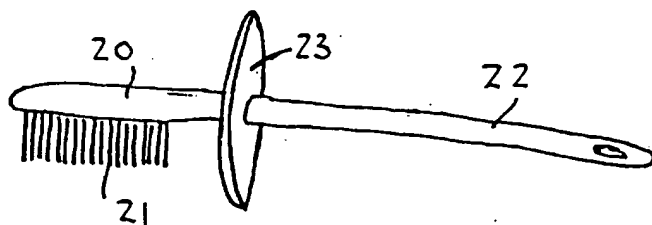
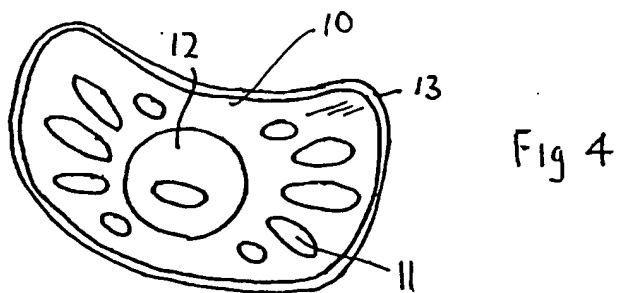
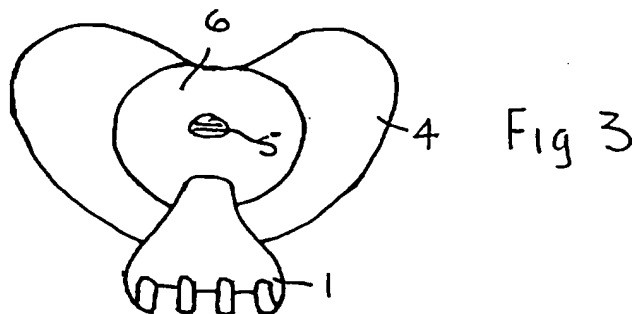
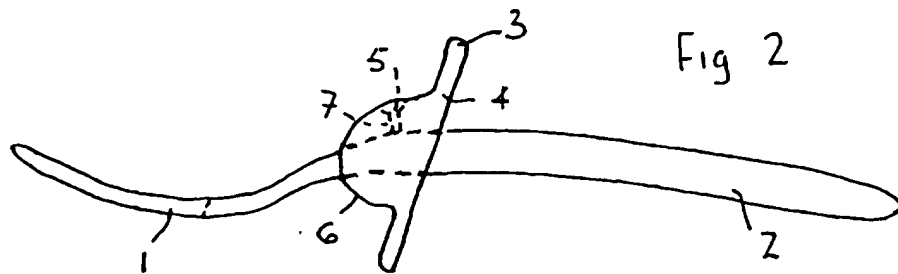


Fig 5

1

DOMESTIC UTENSIL

This invention relates to a domestic utensil which is particularly though not exclusively applicable for use by children or individuals with varying degrees of disabilities.

There is a broad range of children and individuals, including young people with varying degrees of disabilities, and even though there are many different types of utensils, for example, feeding cutlery and other articles, there do not seem to be any that are currently available to meet the requirement of many disabled people or very young children.

Individuals and young children of the type referred to above, tend to lose control of cutlery and their hand tends to slide down the handle, thus pushing the food off or the handle tends to revolve in their hand.

It is also possible for such users to inadvertently push cutlery too far into their mouth thus causing injury.

The present invention is intended to overcome the problems referred to above and the utensils according to the invention can be used by children or by adults suffering from arthritis, cerebral palsy and other ailments which affect the control of the hands and arms. Thus the utensil has a potential for people of all different ages with difficulty in controlling their hands and arm movements. It can also be used in hospitals therapeutically, for example, after heart attacks, strokes or during recovery from operations.

According to the present invention, a domestic utensil comprises an operative portion and handle, and is provided with stop means for preventing user's hand from sliding down the handle on to the operative portion.

Preferably the stop means comprises a guard which is situated on the handle adjacent to the operative portion and this can be in the form of an upstanding flange projecting away from the handle.

A convenient construction of the stop means extends around the circumference of the handle and can be made from a synthetic plastics material, metal or a combination thereof. If desired the stop means can be provided with a protective edge made from a resilient material.

The stop means can be permanently secured to the handle and if, for example, the utensil is made from a synthetic plastics material, then the stop means can be integral with it

Alternatively, the stop means can be separate from the utensil and be provided with a means to securely fastening it in position.

The configuration of the stop means can vary and in one preferred embodiment it is dished the concave surface thereof facing the handle.

Many forms of domestic utensils can benefit from the invention, for example, the utensil can be a piece of cutlery in metal or plastic form, a tooth brush or hair brush or any other domestic utensil which has what is in effect a handle.

The utensil could come in varying sizes depending upon its use for adults or children.

The invention can be performed in various ways and some embodiments will be described by way of examples with reference to the accompanying drawings in which -

Figure 1 is a set of three implements consisting of a knife, spoon and fork, for use by children;.

Figure 2 is a side elevation of the fork shown in Figure 1;.

Figure 3 is an end elevation of the fork shown in Figure 2;.

Figure 4 is an isometric view of an alternative form of stop means for use with a domestic utensil; and

Figure 5 is an isometric view of a toothbrush embodying the invention.

As shown in Figure 1, the invention applied to a set of fork, spoon and knife made from a synthetic plastics material for children's use and each of the utensils comprises an operative portion indicated by reference numeral 1 which is in the form of a fork, spoon or knife, and the handle (2) of each utensil is provided with stop means (3) which is in the form of a guard located on the handle (2) adjacent to the operative portion (1).

Figure 2 is a side view of the fork shown in Figure 1 and it will be seen that the guard in the form of an upstanding flange (4) projecting away from the handle (2) and extending around the circumference thereof.

In the construction shown in in Figures 1, 2 and 3, stop means (3) is connected to the handle (2) by means of a set screw (5) located in a screw threaded bore (7) provided in an extended portion (6) on the stop means (3), so that it can be screwed in tightly to secure the stop means on to the handle (2).

It will be appreciated that with the stop means (3) in position, the guard which it provides prevents the user's hand from slipping down the handle and pushing the food off. It also prevents the operative part of the utensil from being pushed to far into the user's mouth.

Cutlery can be used by people with restricted hand coordination and enables persons with such problems to get a grip on the cutlery.

Moreover the means prevent a disabled person's hand sliding and coming into contact with a blade of knife or prong of a fork. Utensils according to the invention can therefore be used with advantage in hospitals therapeutically, for example, after heart attacks, strokes or during recovery from operation.

The stop means can be moulded from synthetic plastics material or can be made from metal or aluminium.

All corners and sharp edges are avoided so that there is little chance of personal injury.

Figure 4 shows an alternative shape of stop means which is in the form of a guard (10). This has an dished shape and is provided with a series of openings (11). The guard can again have an extension (12) similar to extension (6) shown in Figures 1, 2 and 3 and any suitable means of connecting the handle of the utensil can be provided, for example, by a set screw as shown in the earlier figures or by means of a clip or other device (not shown). Alternatively, it could permanently secured to the handle on which it is to be used.

This construction incorporates also the use of a protective edge (13) made of resilient material, for example, synthetic plastics materials which not only acts to prevent damage to the user, but also to surface on which the utensil is placed or dropped. The stop means in the form of a shield can be made of any convenient materials, for example synthetic plastics materials or metal.

The invention can be applied to any domestic utensil which has a handle, for example brushes of various forms, such as toothbrushes and hairbrushes and Figure 5 shows a toothbrush incorporating the invention. In this arrangement, the operative portion (20) carries bristles (21) for cleaning the user's teeth, and a handle (22).

Incorporated in the handle is the stop means in the form of a disk (23) which can prevent the user's hand from sliding down the handle (22) or to prevent the toothbrush being pushed too far into the user's mouth.

In the construction of Figures 1, 2 and 3, the stop means are removably attached to the handle but they could be permanently secured and if, for example, the utensil is made from synthetic plastic materials it could be moulded integrally with it.

The invention therefore provides a domestic utensil for example, cutlery or a brush for use by adults or children with restricted hand coordination.

The invention can be made so that it is completely heat resistant in terms of washing and sterilising and can thus be used in hospitals. Cutlery embodying the arrangement can also be made in different sizes to suit the user, adult or child.

If for example the cutlery intended for use by adults, the stop means can be made from, for example, stainless steel or a mixture of plastic material and stainless steel to provide an attractive appearance.

CLAIMS

1. A domestic utensil comprising an operative portion and a handle, and provided with stop means for preventing the user's hand from sliding down the handle onto the operative portion.
2. A domestic utensil as claimed in claim 1 in which said stop means comprise a guard located on the handle adjacent the operative portion.
3. A domestic utensil as claimed in claim 2 in which said guard is in the form of an upstanding flange projecting away from the handle.
4. A domestic utensil as claimed in any one of the preceding claims 1 to 3 in which said stop means extends around the circumference of the handle.
5. A domestic utensil as claimed in any one of the preceding claims 1 to 4 in which the stop means is made from a synthetic plastics material, metal or a combination thereof.
6. A domestic utensil as claimed in any one of the preceding claims 1 to 5 in which said stop means is provided with a protective edge made from a resilient material.
7. A domestic utensil as claimed in any one of the preceding claims 1 to 6 in which said stop means is permanently secured to said handle.
8. A domestic utensil as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which said stop means is dished, the concave surface thereof facing the handle.

9. A domestic utensil as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in the form of a piece of cutlery, a toothbrush or hairbrush.

10. A domestic utensil substantially as described herein with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.



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Examiner: Dr Fatema
Sardharwala

Claims searched: 1-10

Date of search: 8 November 1999

Patents Act 1977

Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK Cl (Ed.Q): A4A, A4K (KCB, KFX)

Int Cl (Ed.6): A46B 5/02, A47G 21/02, 21/04, 21/08, B26B 3/02, 29/02

Other: Online: WPI, EPODOC, JAPIO

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
X	GB 2015324 A (CAVICCOHIONI) Fig. 1 and lines 21-26 and 49-55 of page 1	1-5, 7, 9
X	GB 606298 (HOSKING) Fig. 1 and line 74 page 1 to line 9 of page 2 and lines 30 to 35 of page 2	1-9
X	GB 188835 (RODWELL) line 101 of page 2 to line 35 of page 3	1-9
X	US 5617884 (ALLISON) Fig. 1 and lines 1-4 of column 4	1-4, 7, 9
X	US 4621387 (NOSER) Fig. 1, 7 and 8 and lines 11-16 of column 3	1-9
X	US 4558483 (NOSER) Fig. 1, 7 and 8 and lines 33-54 of column 4, lines 1-25 of column 5 and lines 11-16 of column 3	1-5, 7-9

X Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step
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E Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.